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Chapter
6

TODAY THE STORY OCCURS OUTSIDE OF THE PALACE
PLEASE!
THE YOUNG MASTER FORGOT SOMETHING!

TODAY, YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO ENTER THE SCHOOL
NO, NO!
IF IT'S NOT RETURNED SOON, I'M SURE HE'LL WORRY!
HE NEEDS THESE RETURNED TO HIM
THAT'S WHY!
IT'S THE ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY, AND HER MAJESTY IS IN ATTENDANCE
clop
clop
Step back
!
SHOVE
SOMEONE HAS TO GUIDE THE HORSES DURING THEIR ARRIVAL.
clop
clop
THE EMPEROR HAS GONE OUTSIDE OF THE PALACE

LINE UP!
THIS IS THE "IMPERIAL VISIT"
chatter
chatter

I'M GOING TO THE STORE FOR A BIT TO BUY WHITE GLOVES
An earthquake?
Eh?
clatter
clatter
clatter
clatter
clatter
DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING FOR THE ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY?
An earthquake?
NO,
I WAS GOING TO BUY SOME NEW GLOVES BECAUSE THEY HAD GOTTEN TOO SMALL.
shake
shake
shake
shake
shake
shake
shake
shake
KURODA.
WAIT, MISONO, I'LL COME TOO.

HEY, IT'S BEEN SHAKING FOR A WHILE.
shake
shake
shake
shake
shake
shake
KURODA! IT'S YOU?
Yes, at today's ceremony, I will be the top student of the second class
I will have the honor of delivering a speech in Her Majesty's presence
I'm trembling with excitement
Shake
Shake
Shake
Shake
The rest of his stress came out.
UGGGH
UGG
UGH
I WILL HAVE TO GET USED TO THIS
YOU SEE HER EVERY FIRST OF THE MONTH, SO
Ugh
I, MISONO KIMIYORI,
Hurrp

I AM A SIXTH YEAR STUDENT IN THE SECOND CLASS
I ALSO SERVE AS A CHAMBER-LAIN'S ATTENDANT IN THE PALACE
HOWEVER, TODAY MY ROLE IS DIFFERENT FROM MY ROLE IN THE PALACE
THE SCHOOL IS QUITE SPACIOUS
YOUR MAJESTY,
ohoho
IT'S GOOD TO CONSIDER SAFETY THE DAY BEFORE THE IMPERIAL VISIT
I-IT'S NOT THAT
THIS IS ONLY AN INVESTIGATION FOR TOMORROW

YES MA'AM. AS A PUPIL, I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR FIRST VISIT.
IT'S THE ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY OF AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE.
WHERE IS YOUR MAJESTY GOING TOMORROW?
POW
OH, IT'S MISONO-SAN'S SCHOOL!
WELL, IT'S TIME FOR TEA NOW
MISONO,
PUT AWAY THE MAP.
I ONCE WENT TO THE ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY
My older brother was a student
STUDENTS ARE SO HANDSOME
Right?
WHAT WILL YOU BE DOING, MISONO-SAN?
I SAW THE ENGLISH LECTURES, EXERCISES AND HORSEBACK RIDING.
Umm
.....

I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING.
It's not my turn
NOTHING?
MY GRADES IN MARTIAL ARTS ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MIDDLE...
woof
YOUR MAJESTY WILL SEE
ONLY THE MOST ACCOMPLISHED STUDENTS IN BOTH LITERARY AND MILITARY ARTS.
SO PLEASE ENJOY YOURSELF
.....
SO IT WILL ALL BE PREPARED FOR ME...
WON'T IT?
clatter
I WANT TO SEE HOW IT REALLY IS.

HOW IT REALLY IS.
UGGGH
OOOH
GGH
NO, SHE WOULDN'T WANT TO SEE THIS
HAVE YOU CALMED DOWN AT ALL?
huff
YEAH. I'M LESS NERVOUS THAN WHEN I WAS IN THE CLASS-ROOM.
I'VE CALMED DOWN BEHIND THE SCHOOL BUILDING...
breathes
KURODA
YOU NEED TO LEARN SELF-CONFIDENCE
WHAT?

I ALWAYS OBSERVE HER MAJESTY AS THOUGH IT'S PART OF MY STUDIES.
I NEVER HAD NOTES WHEN I STARTED TO WORK BESIDE HER MAJESTY. I HAD TO WATCH OTHERS CAREFULLY.
Hehe
MISONO
YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT IS VERY LOGICAL!
HA HA HA
WELL,
WE SHALL PERUSE THIS CLEAR DAY IN THE SCHOOL'S HISTORY
Let's go.

AT TEN O'CLOCK THE EMPEROR'S CARRIAGE ARRIVES AT THE SCHOOL
I can't see the carriage.
UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF THE DIRECTOR, HER MAJESTY APPEARS IN THE TEMPLE
A SPEECH IS DELIVERED BEFORE THE EMPEROR BY THE SELECTED STUDENTS

clap
clap
AFTER THAT, AT THE SPORTS GROUND, GYMNASTICS, MARTIAL ARTS AND THE LIKE ARE GIVEN AN IMPERIAL INSPECTION
CLACK
YOUR MAJESTY
Ahhh
clap
clap
A REST SOUNDS GOOD
cough
AFTER THIS, YOUR MAJESTY SHOULD TAKE A SHORT REST...
PLEASE ASK THE DIRECTOR
IN THE IMPERIAL PRESENCE, THE STUDENTS ARE INSPIRED BY THE GREAT HONOR
DID YOU SEE? MISONO, HER MAJESTY APPLAUDED MY SPEECH!
glow
glow

I CAN ALWAYS MEET HER IN THE PALACE, SO...
Like today
EVEN THOUGH I CAN'T SEE HER NOW
What he really saw
Y-YEAH...
glow glow
I SAW IT, I SAW IT
MISONO! KURODA!
dejected
SENSEI!
PLEASE COME TO THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE RIGHT NOW!
THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE?

HER MAJESTY HAS REQUESTED THAT SHE BE GUIDED AROUND THE SCHOOL BY STUDENTS.
SO, THE TOP STUDENT AND THE CHAMBERLAIN'S ATTENDANT WERE SELECTED.
I CAN ALWAYS MEET HER IN THE PALACE, SO...
DO NOT DISHONOR THE STUDENTS OF THIS SCHOOL AS YOU GUIDE HER MAJESTY
NO, IT'S NICE TO SEE HER OUTSIDE OF THE PALACE!
YES, SIR!

shake
shake
shake

shake
shake shake shake
Next is... th-th-the special classroom!
HIS SEEMS A BIT OFF IS HE OKAY?
YEAH
KURODA IS JUST A LITTLE NERVOUS
HE WAS SUDDENLY ASKED TO GUIDE YOUR MAJESTY THROUGH THE SCHOOL...
suspicious
IS IT SOMETHING BAD...
HOW CAN I SAY THIS? IS IT TROUBLE-SOME, FOR ME TO SEE
YOUR ORDINARY LIVES?

I ALWAYS HAVE THINGS PREPARED FOR ME, SO THERE ARE THINGS I DON'T SEE.
KURODA!
SURPRISED
SHAKE
SHAKE
LET'S TAKE HER MAJESTY BEHIND THE SCHOOL BUILDING
HUH?
WE SHOULD TAKE HER TO THE PLACES SHE WANTS TO SEE DURING THE TOUR.

YOUR MAJESTY,
WELCOME
TO OUR SCHOOL!
Once, when I was late, I came into the classroom this way

THIS POND?
THAT'S A VERY BLOODY NAME...
LONG AGO, A SAMURAI WASHED THE HEAD OF HIS ENEMY AND HIS BLOODY SWORD IN THIS POND.
IT IS
THE STUDENTS ALL CALL THIS THE "HEAD WASHING POND"
Hmm...
THAT CERTAINLY SOUNDS CREEPY...
Thump Thump
GULP
EVEN NOW, IF THE WATER IS TAINTED THE COLOR OF BLOOD, IT'S CONSIDERED AN EVIL OMEN...
THAT STORY ISN'T TRUE.
Umm...
Silence

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, KURODA!?
Everyone says so, I heard it from a senpai
...WHAT?
No way
YOU BELIEVED IT WITHOUT DOING ANY RESEARCH THAT POND WASN'T HERE BEFORE THE SCHOOL WAS BUILT
Eh
THAT HEAD WASHING STORY WAS INVENTED AS A TRADITION BY THE LITERARY CLUB MEMBERS
.....
Hoohoo,
Ha Ha Ha
THAT'S GOOD QUALITY FICTION!
CONSIDERING THAT KURODA HAD TO TEACH YOU THE TRUTH!
Ha Ha Ha
.....

I HAD THOUGHT THAT SHE WAS AN UNAPPROACHABLE PERSON
Oh.
His shaking has stopped
YEAH...
SHE'S REALLY A CHARMING PERSON.

MISONO, KURODA.
THIS ROCK WALL.
WHAT'S ITS HISTORY?

IT IS THE REMAINS OF A SAMURAI FAMILY'S RESIDENCE THAT STOOD IN THIS PLACE LONG AGO.
YOUR MAJESTY
rustle
THIS ROCK WALL...
!
ROKUJOUIN-NO-MIYA...!

YOU WERE SO LATE IN COMING BACK, I CAME TO GREET YOU MYSELF,
YOUR MAJESTY.
YOU CAME, ROKUOUIN-NO-MIYA.
RUSTLE

YOU DON'T NEED TO APOLOGIZE FOR BEING LATE.
I ALSO GRADUATED FROM THIS SCHOOL.
IF YOUR MAJESTY HAS QUESTIONS, I WOULD BE ABLE TO OFFER YOU A TOUR AS WELL.
BUT NOT PLACES BEHIND THE SCHOOL LIKE THIS.
.....
I WANTED TO SEE ORDINARY SCHOOL LIFE, SO I ASKED THEM TO SHOW ME.
hehe
INDEED SO, ALLOW ME TO OFFER AN EXPLANATION.
THIS STONE WALL WAS AN ARENA FOR THE STUDENTS AT THIS SCHOOL I WRESTLED WITH MY SCHOOL FRIENDS HERE AS WELL.
I MISS THOSE DAYS.
HIS HIGHNESS ROKUOUIN-NO-MIYA TAKEHIKO WAS ORIGINALLY HER MAJESTY'S FIANCE
TOWARDS ME, WHO WORKS CLOSE BESIDE HER MAJESTY—
swish

MISONO,
LET'S SEE WHO'S BEST.
HE FEELS HATRED.
SMILE
EH?
NO! SOMEONE LIKE ME COULDN'T POSSIBLY COMPETE WITH SOMEONE LIKE MIYA-SAMA
IF YOU'RE A BOY FROM THIS SCHOOL, SURELY YOU'VE WRESTLED HERE BEFORE?
slips off
...YES...
One or two years ago
THEN, LET'S HAVE ONE BOUT BEFORE HER MAJESTY
HER MAJESTY WANTED TO SEE THE STUDENTS ORDINARY LIVES, DIDN'T SHE?

NO
HE REALLY HATES ME
.....
OKAY
MISONO!
BY THE WAY, I WAS UNDEFEATED DURING MY SIXTH YEAR
Okay
THE RULES ARE SIMPLE
THE FIRST TO FALL OFF IS THE LOSER

INCHING FORWARD
bow
PLEASE GO EASY ON ME.
THE SAME TO YOU, YOUNG MAN.
SMILE
GRAB
WOAH!
WA-
WOBBLE

EXCUSE ME !
GRAB
THIS IS JUST LIKE BEFORE
ARE THESE THE ACTIONS OF A MERE RETAINER?
clench
clench
NERVOUS
IF I FALL OFF IN A CLUMSY WAY,
MIYA-SAMA WOULD ENJOY IT

SO—
MISONO!
grip
!

ZIOOZ
huff
huff
huff
huff

IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS,
THE CHAMBERLAINS AND TEACHERS CAME TO GREET HER MAJESTY
Your Majesty!
Miya-sama
THEY TURNED PALE WHEN THEY SAW OUR APPEARANCES
ROKUOUIN-NO-MIYA-SAMA INTERVENED
I was the one who suggested it
WE WERE NOT SCOLDED ANY FURTHER
splash
splash
SPLASH
SPLASH

WHAT WERE YOU HOLDING OUT FOR!?
HE DOESN'T SEEM SO BAD
splash splash
RUB RUB
I KNOW.
DID YOU THINK HE WOULD MEEKLY ALLOW YOU TO WIN...
THEN WHY?
I KNOW
MIYA-SAMA USED THE WRESTLING AS AN EXCUSE BECAUSE HE WANTED TO THROW ME OFF
IF I LOST, MIYA-SAMA WOULD ENJOY IT
.....
JUST,

IF SHE HADN'T BEEN WATCHING,
I WOULD HAVE LOST.

I MIGHT NEED TO LET OUT ALL OF MY STRESS AND UNEASE AGAIN!!
sigh
shake
shake
shake
shake
Remembering the shaking
THANK YOU, KURODA
YEAH...
grip
EVERYONE IS PROBABLY ALREADY GATHERED AT THE MAIN GATE.
LET'S GO BACK TO SEE HER MAJESTY OFF.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
CRACK
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
WHAT'S... THAT?
Well
!

That voice...
YOUNG MASTER!
RUSTLE
ORITSU!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
Is she the Misono family's maid?
I'M RETURNING SOMETHING YOU FORGOT.
I WENT THROUGH THE MAIN GATE
ONCE I CROSSED OVER A HEDGE, I WAS LOST IN A VAST SPACE
Where am I?
BUT THAT'S NO EXCUSE FOR MY LATENESS!
I FORGOT THIS ?
offers
!
He has them.
(New ones)

I'M SORRY, ORITSU!!
useless
useless...
A fool's errand...
YOU TOOK THE TROUBLE TO BRING THEM ALL THE WAY HERE...
4h.
OKAY!
WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HER MAJESTY?
?
chatter
chatter
WOW, AN INCREDIBLE PERSON!
YOU'LL STAND OUT IF YOU COME ANY FURTHER.

UMM... BUT, YOUNG MASTER, I HAVE BAD EYES AND CAN'T SEE VERY FAR.
Eh?
I CAN LEND YOU MY GLASSES
I don't know if they'll work.
I CAN SEE.
HER FACE IS DIFFERENT!?
LOOK
HER MAJESTY IS RETURNING TO THE PALACE.
BOW

WOW
A BEAUTIFUL ANGEL...
YOUNG MASTER! DID YOU SEE...
YOUNG MASTER...
MY FEET ARE DIRTY...

I DON'T
WANT TO BE SEEN LIKE THIS...
THAT WAS AN EXCELLENT IMPERIAL VISIT.
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP

YOUR MAJESTY IS STILL THINKING ABOUT THAT BOY
Why are we in the same carriage?
I SAID THAT WHEN I WRESTLED WITH MY SCHOOL FRIENDS, I WAS UNDEFEATED
I REALIZED A LITTLE WHILE AGO WHEN I FOUGHT WITH MISONO,
THAT MY FRIENDS HAD CONSIDERED MY SOCIAL POSITION AND ALLOWED ME TO WIN
IS THAT WHY HE HAS CAPTIVATED YOUR MAJESTY'S EYES?
CHITTER-
YES

BUT THE EMPEROR AND A RETAINER
LIVE IN DIFFERENT WORLDS.
CLATTER
EVEN IF YOUR MAJESTY WATCHES THE RETAINERS' "ORDINARY LIVES,"
OR LETS THEM INTO YOUR HEART,
THEY ARE ALWAYS PAYING ATTENTION TO OUR SOCIAL POSITIONS, AND DO NOT SEE INSIDE OUR HEARTS.

CLOP
CLOP
THANK YOU FOR THE ADVICE, MIYA.
CERTAINLY, SOMEONE WHO SEES WITH ONLY THEIR SENSES,
WOULD THINK SOMETHING SO HARSH.
BUT, OPENING UP MY HEART? NO,
THAT IS SEEING THROUGH MY OWN EYES.

I SAW A LOT OF GOOD THINGS TODAY.
MIYA, THAT PLACE,
DID YOU KNOW IT WAS CALLED THE "HEAD WASHING POND"?
?
OF COURSE I KNOW
IT'S BECAUSE A SAMURAI WASHED THE HEAD OF HIS FOE THERE.
ALL THE STUDENTS AT THAT SCHOOL KNOW THIS!
MY FRIENDS SAID THAT IF THE WATER TURNED RED, IT WOULD BE SUCH A SURPRISE THAT...
FWUNTY
FFFt

YOUR MAJESTY?
YOU'RE SAYING SOMETHING RIDICULOUS LIKE THAT?
NO, IT'S NOTHING.